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Working at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

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General

The IAEA is a United Nations (UN) organization headquartered in Vienna, Austria. With more than 139 member states, the IAEA promotes the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. It has vital obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It also plays key roles in contributing to international peace and security and to the World's Millennium Goals for social, economic and environmental development.

Three main areas of work underpin the IAEA mission:

Promoting Safeguards & Verification

The IAEA is the world's nuclear inspectorate with more than four decades of verification experience. Inspectors verify that safeguarded nuclear material and activities are not used for military purposes. The Agency is additionally responsible for the nuclear file in Iraq as mandated by the UN Security Council.

Promoting Safety and Security

The IAEA helps countries to upgrade nuclear safety and security and to prepare for and respond to emergencies. International conventions, standards, and expert guidance provide the foundations for this work whose goal is to protect people and the environment from harmful radiation exposure.

Promoting Science & Technology

The IAEA is the world's focal point for peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology for sustainable development and critical needs in developing countries. The work contributes to fighting poverty, disease, and pollution of the environment.

The IAEA may be best known by the general public as the organization responsible for verifying safeguards obligations under the NPT. The NPT is nearly universal. Only India, Israel, and Pakistan have not adhered the NPT. The DPRK announced its withdrawal from the Treaty in 2003. Since the late 1980s the IAEA has engaged in several high-profile nonproliferation efforts. Although primarily a technical organization, the IAEA often operates in the highly charged political environment of nuclear nonproliferation.

For instance, the IAEA certified the destruction of South Africa's nuclear weapons program, when South Africa acceded to the NPT. It implemented the inspection regime established by the US/North Korean Agreed Framework of 1994, until North Korea formally withdrew from the Framework and the NPT. Between 1991 and 1998 it conducted inspections of Iraq's nuclear activities under the aegis of UN Security Council Resolutions. Recent high profile IAEA activities include the certification of the end of Libya's nuclear weapon activities, investigation of undeclared nuclear activities in South Korea, and continued investigation of Iran's nuclear program, including Iran's failure to declare all of its nuclear activities over an 18-year period.

In the area of civil nuclear power the IAEA provides many services to assist Member States in developing safe, economical nuclear power institutions and operations. The IAEA's legal department has developed templates for the legal structure needed to govern and regulate nuclear power industry. IAEA lawyers assist Member States in adapting these templates to the specific conditions found in those States implementing a civil nuclear program.

The easiest way to become familiar with the breadth of IAEA activities is to browse its website – www.iaea.org.

Working for an International Organization

Working for an international organization like the IAEA requires flexibility and adaptability. What works in an American context and an American culture may not always work in an international organization where professionals from many countries, contexts, and cultures must learn to work together to achieve their common goals. The skills needed for a successful tour in an international organization include a willingness to listen to and accommodate other points of view, adaptability, flexibility, patience, and humour. In return an IAEA employee learns a multiplicity of ways to address issues and to solve problems and experiences the many ways of viewing American culture and the United States, while working with a diverse, multi-national work force. These are invaluable lessons, even though learning them can sometimes be frustrating.

Living in Vienna

Living in Vienna is another of the many advantages of working at the IAEA. Vienna, with a population of about three million in its urban agglomeration, has many advantages of a large European city, including world class opera, classical music, and museums, a wealth of historical monuments and churches, beautiful architecture, wonderful restaurants and cafés, and efficient, inexpensive public transportation. In the case of Vienna, these large city attributes combine with a small town feel and the ability to get out of the city and into the Austrian countryside in less than 30 minutes.

Like working at the IAEA living in Vienna requires flexibility and adaptability. Vienna is different from any American city and requires getting used to. While an American can

find all the comforts of home in Vienna, those American comforts often come with an expensive price tag. A willingness to accept Vienna and the Viennese as they are speeds the process of adaptation and increases the enjoyment of the city and its residents.

Vienna offers an especially good vantage point for exploring Central Europe. Austria, surrounded by the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Italy, Switzerland, and Germany, can be a springboard to exploring these countries. Prague is a six-hour train ride from Vienna; Munich a five-hour train ride; Budapest a mere three hours by train. Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia and a delightful small city, is only an hour from Vienna. By car northern Italy, Venice, and the Veneto are six or seven hours drive. The Italian lakes and Tuscany are only slightly longer drives.

Total Remuneration

Due to differences in taxes and a variety of other factors, the most accurate way to compare IAEA salaries with American salaries is on a net-after-tax basis. The net-after-tax basis is the income after subtracting social security and federal and state income taxes from the gross salary.

If one takes as an example, someone who has a gross salary in the US of \$100,000, one has to subtract social security and income taxes from this gross salary to arrive at net-after-tax basis. Assuming social security at 7.65%, federal income tax of 20%, and state income tax of 5%, then the net-after-tax income is \$67,350.

The following are approximate 2005 entry-level salaries for selected IAEA pay grades. These numbers include IAEA allowances for at least one dependent, post adjustment (cost of living allowance for Vienna), and an assumed rental subsidy of \$7,600 per year. The IAEA rental subsidy decreases over a five- or seven-year period.

Grade	Estimated Annual Salary (\$)
P-5	120,000
P-4	101,000
P-3	85,000

Not included in these figures are the IAEA allowances for moving expenses, arrival and departure expenses, and educational costs. For an American these allowances represent substantial increases in total remuneration. For example, the IAEA educational allowance for a dependent going to a university can be as much as \$20,000 per year until the dependent receives his first undergraduate degree. See **Schools** below. The arrival allowance helps to defray the cost of leasing an apartment, which in Vienna usually requires a security deposit equal to three months rent.

You can do the math based upon your own salary and tax situation to compare your current after-tax salary to the IAEA salary levels above.

Taxes

All Americans must pay US income taxes. All countries except the US exempt their citizens who are employees of international organizations from paying national taxes. For that reason the IAEA reimburses Americans for their US taxes that are due to IAEA remuneration. The net result is that IAEA staff members do not pay US federal or state income taxes.

In addition, Americans living abroad enjoy several tax exemptions not available to Americans living in the US. As of 2005, the first \$80,000 of their salary is tax exempt. The cost of rent, heat, gas, and electricity are also deductible.

IAEA staff members have no US federal or state income tax deducted from their IAEA salaries. In addition, most IAEA staff members do not normally contribute to Social Security (SS), unless they choose to do so in order to qualify for SS payments. Most people who have worked for several years have already met the requirements to qualify for SS benefits, and they lose little by not paying into SS while at the Agency. Thus, their gross and net IAEA salaries are the same.

Additionally, IAEA staff members are eligible to purchase one automobile tax-free every 4 years. This is a real benefit, since taxes on an automobile range from 25-40% of the purchase price.

IAEA staff of P-5 level and above have additional benefits (the same as foreign diplomats assigned to embassies or missions in Vienna). These include, for example, not being required to pay VAT for most purchases, or for their rent.

Schools

Staff members who are entitled to receive the education grant can claim all expenses prescribed by the educational institution as a pre-condition for admittance and all the other costs certified as being mandatory for all students. A fixed rate payment for books and other learning aids can be authorized in cases where the books are not free of charge. The maximum amount that the IAEA will pay for schools/universities in the US is currently \$21,624 per student per year. The Agency pays 75% of education expenses up to this maximum payout per student. Staff whose children are attending educational institution(s) outside the duty station which is/are not within the commuting distance may claim either a flat rate for board and lodging or, if room and board are provided by the educational institution, these expenses can be reimbursed together with the tuition fee, subject to the overall limit, which in the US is currently \$21,624.

A staff member who has one student in a US university would have to earn about \$32,000 before taxes to equal the value of this education grant; for two students, \$64,000, etc.

This education grant also applies to primary and secondary schools in Vienna, such as the American International School (AIS) and the Vienna International School (VIS). Both have reputations as first-rate educational institutions. Both have an international student

body with resultant opportunities to obtain a broad view of the world. Moreover, Americans applying to US universities from an overseas location often have an advantage over students applying from the US, since most universities put a premium on overseas experience.

Living Conditions and Quality of Life

Vienna is rated as one of the most liveable cities in the world. The 2005 EIU quality of life ratings for the world's cities ranked Vienna 3rd in the world. Vienna is a safer city than any similarly sized US city. In Vienna parents routinely allow their children to come and go on public transportation with a freedom that would be unthinkable in a comparable US city.

There is much green space in and around the city. The famous Viennese hills begin where the public transportation system ends and offer an endless variety of hikes and walks.

The public transportation system is superb. Almost no location in the city is more than a few blocks from public transportation, and the price of an annual pass on the entire system is about \$50/month/person. It is quite feasible to live without a car in Vienna, although most Americans on the IAEA staff do own a car.

Vienna is a city with many cultural opportunities and a sophisticated population. It is famous for opera and classical music. The Belvedere, Kunsthistorische Museum, Albertina, and the newly opened Museum Quarter all have excellent art collections. For lovers of architecture Vienna is replete with fine examples of Austrian baroque architecture. The former home of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Mahler, Vienna continues to enjoy a rich classical music scene with several concerts on any given night.

The additional dimension of the international community of some 4000 at the UN provides further richness of cultural experiences.

The VIC Housing Office provides assistance for IAEA and other UN employees in finding accommodations in Vienna. Its services include, among others, maintaining a listing of housing available in Vienna, and reviewing lease agreements to ensure that they respect the rights of tenants.

The Austrian Government has an agreement with the IAEA that is intended to enable staff members' spouses and children up to age 21 to gain preferential access to the Austrian labor market under certain circumstances. "The Employment Booklet for UN and Embassy Spouses," published by The United Nations Women's Guild (UNWG) is available at the UNWG stand at Check Point 1 the pedestrian entrance to the VIC.

Finally, the American Women's Association of Vienna publishes an invaluable, detailed book on the all aspects of living in Vienna. Titled appropriately enough, Living in

Vienna, this book provides up-to-date information on Austria, transportation, driving, communications, banking, food, home, dining, children, seniors, medical, pets, education, religion, and a host of other topics.

Vacation

All full-time IAEA staff members receive 6 weeks of vacation time per year. The length of vacation does not increase with years of service. In addition there are 10 official holidays each year. It is also possible to earn additional compensatory time off (CTO) for hours worked beyond the normal workweek.

Vienna's central location in Europe makes it an ideal point from which to explore Europe in a depth that almost no Americans have a chance to do. For skiers and hikers Austria, one of the most beautiful countries in the world, is a wonderland of opportunity at virtually every price point.

Every other year IAEA staff members receive an allowance for home leave. This allowance provides transportation to and from the staff member's home country.

Pension

IAEA staff members contribute 7.9% of their salary to the IAEA pension fund, and the Agency contributes twice that amount to the fund. As a minimum each staff member receives his/her contribution plus interest when he/she leaves the Agency. After five or more years of service, staff members are fully vested in the Agency's retirement plan and are eligible to receive a pension at age 62. The amount of the pension is based on the staff member's contributions.

Rental Subsidy

The IAEA provides new employees with a rental subsidy in addition to basic salary and post adjustment (cost of living allowance) to compensate for high rents in the Vienna area. The amount of the subsidy varies widely depending upon the number of dependents and monthly rent. A typical rental subsidy ranges from \$500-\$800 per month.

The amount of the subsidy is established by subtracting a threshold amount from either the actual rent or a reasonable maximum rent level, if that is lower. The staff member's subsidy is equal to 80% of the difference. Assuming the staff member remains with the IAEA, the rental subsidy continues at 80% reimbursement for the first four years of service, and then decreases over the next three years to 60%, 40% and 20% respectively.

Cost of Living in Vienna

The cost of living in Vienna is higher than it is in most American cities. The IAEA provides a cost of living allowance (COLA), called a post adjustment, to account for the

higher cost of living. The COLA keeps IAEA salaries constant in terms of the local currency (euro).

Family

One of the keys to an enjoyable IAEA experience is for both spouse and children to be positive about their life in Vienna. Generally for school age children this is not a problem, since the students at the AIS and VIS expect to have new classmates and friends each year, and there is little or no stigma of being the “new kid” at these schools.

While there has been recent emphasis on providing work opportunities for spouses, the reality is that most spouses who want to work in Vienna are not able to. Many spouses engage with the local community through the UN Women’s Guild (UNWG) and/or American Women’s Association (AWA). The UNWG is a very active organization with over 500 members in Vienna. Many wives of IAEA Staff Members participate in UNWG activities such as tours, conversational language classes, staffing the UNWG kiosk, participating in charity review, and helping with the planning and conduct of the annual UNWG International Bazaar. In 2005 the UNWG raised over \$250,000 that was used to fund children and women’s charities throughout the world.

The UN Organizations in Vienna, of which the IAEA is the largest, offer a number of recreational clubs, ranging from chess to darts to sailing, skiing, hiking, golf, and tennis. These clubs always need volunteers and welcome spouses, especially those willing to volunteer.

Language

Austria earns almost a third of its gross domestic product from tourism. As a result most Austrians speak English quite well and Americans can get along in (American) English quite easily.

Nevertheless, it is helpful to speak German in Austria. Even those Austrians who reply in English appreciate the effort to speak their language. For its employees the IAEA will subsidize German lessons. For spouses Vienna has numerous language schools.

Adults will find that one significant advantage of living in Vienna is how quickly and how well their children learn German. Later the children will appreciate what they have learned.

Medical and Dental Care

Vienna has modern medical and dental facilities comparable to those of any large city. Austria has cradle-to-grave, universal medical coverage for its citizens, and medical costs are, by American standards, quite affordable. Most Austrian doctors and dentists speak good English, and many have taken at least a part of their training in the US.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that Austrian doctors and dentists deliver care in an Austrian, not an American, fashion. Austrian doctors and dentists are not as accustomed to being questioned in detail about their diagnoses, decisions, and treatment plans as their American counterparts. American patients of Austrian doctors and dentists need to be persistent and patient to get the kind of information they are accustomed to in the US. In serious cases a German-speaking doctor from the UN Medical Clinic can sometimes get the desired information on a colleague-to-colleague basis.

The UN Medical Clinic, which is located in the Vienna International Center (VIC), is available to IAEA Staff Members and can provide lists of doctors that other staff members have found to deliver good treatment. Consulting Americans who have lived in Vienna for some time offers another avenue to locating good medical and dental caregivers.

The UN Medical Clinic also offers immunizations against the local Austrian tick-borne disease, and arriving Americans should take advantage of this service.

Medical and Dental Insurance

There are 3 possibilities for dental and health insurance:

- 1) Participate in the Austrian medical and dental insurance system.
- 2) Participate in the UN medical and dental insurance system, provided by VanBreda, a Belgium company.
- 3) Continue your existing medical and dental insurance coverage (if that is permitted by your current employer and/or insurance provider).

Option 1 is generally only taken by Austrians working at the IAEA, or those who are married to Austrian citizens. Austria has a national health care system that has many similarities to the Canadian health care system. Most Americans choose to participate in the UN group medical and dental insurance provided by VanBreda. It is a co-pay system; 80% paid by insurance and 20% by the insured. The monthly premium for a couple is about 460 Euros/month, with the employee responsible for between 20% and 70% of this premium, depending upon monthly salary. Compared to typical US-based health insurance, the VanBreda coverage is broader and with fewer requirements regarding pre-approval and second or third opinions. The coverage includes eyeglasses, and full dental. There is also a catastrophic coverage provision where, above a certain annual out of pocket amount, 100% of medical costs are paid by insurance.

Automobile Insurance

Liability insurance coverage is mandatory in Austria. To enforce this provision insurance company representatives are the ones who register a car and obtain license plates in Austria (once the insurance contract is signed and provisions for payment are established). Only companies licensed and operating in Austria can provide liability coverage for automobiles registered in Austria. It is possible, however, to maintain comprehensive automobile insurance (to cover damage to or loss of the vehicle) with US

based companies, such as USAA, which also do business in Europe. Most IAEA staff, however, have full insurance coverage with the company that provides their liability coverage. The cost of auto insurance in Vienna is less than most metropolitan areas in the US for the same type of vehicle.

Points of Contact

The following table provides a list of Americans who have worked or are working at the IAEA. All of the people on the list have indicated a willingness to discuss working at the IAEA, living in Vienna, and related questions with persons interested in working at the IAEA.

Name	Employer	Telephone	Email	IAEA Experience
John J. Hyland	PNNL (retiree)	703-704-5285	hylandiii@msn.com	1996-2001 (Iraq Nuclear Verification Office (INVO))
Thomas Mazour	IAEA	+43 1 2600 22793	t.mazour@iaea.org	1995-2001 and 2003-present, Division of Nuclear Power